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ABSTRACT

The 1983-84 academic year marked the first year of the Biliteracy Skills Development Program at New York City's George Washington High School. Program students were all Hispanic and spoke Spanish exclusively at home. The major program goal was to facilitate the acquisition of English through the development of literacy in the native language, with mainstreaming as the eventual goal. The project transition into the mainstream was to be accomplished by providing concentrated dosages of language, some content-area instruction through the native language, and opportunity to participate in non-academic subject classes taught in English. Parents were encouraged to become involved in their children's education and to take adult education classes in academic and vocational subjects. Achievement data of first year participants indicates that: (1) Overall, students surpassed objectives in English language development. (2) Score gains in Spanish reading for the total population were statistically significant; (3) The objective that 65 percent of the students would achieve a passing grade was achieved only in typing classes and fall science classes, not math or social studies. (4) The attendance rate of students was significantly higher than the schoolwide rate, but the objective of 25 percent improvement was not met. It is recommended that: (1) students' use of English should be increased through classroom and extracurricular activities; (2) classes for accommodating students to their new environment should be offered; and (3) staff development opportunites should be increased for teachers and paraprofessionals. Appendices provide data in tabular form. (KH)

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GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

BILITERACY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

1983-1984

OEA Evaluation Report

O.E.A. Evaluation Section Report

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Grant Number: 600-830-2655

GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

BILITERACY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

1983-1984

Principal:
Mr. Waldemar Rojas

Director:
Mr. Jose Fraga

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A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The Biliteracy Skills Development Program, in its first year of a three-year funding cycle, offered bilingual instruction and supportive services with a concentration on native language literacy and English as a second language to 210 Hispanic limited English proficient (LEP) students in grades nine and ten. Program students were all Hispanic and spoke Spanish exclusively at home and in their communities. All but two students were born outside mainland United States and had been here for less than one year. Eighty-nine percent were born in the Dominican Republic and the other ten percent came from Central and South American countries. The students varied minimally in English proficiency, native language ability, and overall academic preparedness. Some students from the Dominican Republic had had limited school experience in their native country.

The major program goal was to facilitate the acquisition of English through the development of literacy in the native language, with mainstreaming as the eventual goal. The project transition into the mainstream was to be accomplished by providing concentrated dosages of language, some content-area instruction through the native language, and to a lesser degree, opportunity to participate in non-academic subject classes taught in English.

Title VII funds provided for staff positions in administration and support services. The instructional component was supported primarily by tax-levy, and Chapter I/P.S.E.N. funds. Supportive services to program students consisted of academic and personal guidance, home visits, phone contacts, and outside referrals. Staff development activities, one responsibility of the Title VII consultant to the project, included an initial orientation session, common preparation periods to facilitate joint planning, and staff development meetings. Parents of program students participated in a parent advisory committee, and a variety of school-wide and program activities.

Program objectives were assessed in English language development (Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test [CREST]); mastery of the native language (La Prueba de Lectura, Level III); mathematics, science, social studies, and typing (teacher-made examinations); and attendance (school and program records). Quantitative analysis of student achievement data indicates that:

-- Overall, students surpassed the program objective in English language development by mastering 2.1 CREST objectives in the fall and 1.1 CREST objectives in the spring.

-- The score gains on La Prueba de Lectura for the total population were statistically significant; thus, the program objective was achieved.

-- The program objective (that 65 percent of the students would achieve a passing grade) was achieved only in fall and spring typing classes and science classes in the fall; it was not achieved in math and social studies.

-- The attendance rate of program students was significantly higher than the schoolwide rate; but the program objective of 25 percent improvement was not met.

The following recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of the program:

-- Increasing the students' use of English through classroom and extracurricular activities.

-- Offering classes aimed at accommodating students to their new environment.

-- Increasing staff development for teachers and paraprofessionals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
BILITERACY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Location:	549 Audubon Avenue New York, New York 10040
Year of Operation:	1983-1984, first funding year
Target Language:	Spanish
Number of Participants:	210 students in grades nine and ten
Principal:	Mr. Waldemar Rojas
Program Director:	Mr. Jose Fraga

INTRODUCTION

The 1983-84 academic year marked the first of a three-year cycle of Title VII funding for the Biliteracy Skills Development Program (B.S.D.P) at George Washington High School. B.S.D.P. is a basic bilingual secondary education program with two major foci: native language literacy and English language proficiency. It is administered within the school's foreign language department and is part of its overall bilingual program. During its first year of operation, it served 210 Hispanic limited English proficient (LEP) students in the ninth and tenth grades, offering bilingual instructional and support services. None of the participants had ever been served by Title VII before, and all had been in the United States for less than one year.

The program's instructional staff participated in staff development activities primarily by attending program-sponsored workshops. Parents were involved by means of a parents' advisory council, adult education

classes, and direct contact with the program's family assistant and other staff members. New York City Public Schools' and commercially-developed curricula were adapted for instruction in English and Spanish.

I. PROGRAM CONTEXT

COMMUNITY SETTING

George Washington High School is located on Manhattan's northwestern side, about twenty blocks north of the George Washington Bridge. The school is surrounded by many old apartment houses, some residential projects, numerous small Hispanic-owned businesses, and other commercial establishments. Also located in the area are hospitals and institutions of higher education including Yeshiva University, and Boricua and City Colleges. Libraries, museums, parks, and other recreational facilities can also be found. Both subway and bus transportation are easily accessible to students.

Linguistically, the area is dominated by Spanish speakers, the majority of whom come from the Dominican Republic. In fact, over the past few years Washington Heights-Inwood has become the area with the highest concentration of Dominicans in the United States.

The area is economically poor and plagued with many of the social problems that face lower socioeconomic groups. These include sub-standard housing and services, income levels qualifying many families for public assistance and students for free school lunches, and a high incidence of drug-related crimes. Teen-age pregnancies and the need and desire to supplement family income are two factors which most directly affect student attendance and drop-out rates.

SCHOOL SETTING

George Washington High School is an academic comprehensive high school housed in an almost fifty-year-old building. Tall columns at

the entrance, a winding central staircase, and very high ceilings contribute to the stately appearance of the building. The school includes an all-weather track, an astroturf field, and tennis and handball courts, facilities which were modernized approximately nine years ago.

The school houses the largest Hispanic population of all high schools in New York City. Of the 3,292 students at George Washington, approximately 85 percent are Hispanic, and of these, 90 percent are Dominican. The next largest group in the school are black students with a few Greeks, Haitians, Arabs, and Russians.

The Title VII bilingual program is located in two small offices on the fourth floor of the building. One office is used by the director and by teachers as a meeting and planning room. The school's bilingual program has a resource center in a large classroom used by program students and teachers, equipped with dictionaries, encyclopedias, other reference materials, and varied types of publications in English and Spanish.

II. PARTICIPANTS

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The criteria for program participation were that students be either new arrivals with limited Spanish literacy skills or potential drop-outs -- students labeled as "high-risk" and normally under-served in most schools. In 1983-84, all program participants were Hispanic ninth and tenth graders who had been in this country for less than one year (see Table 4.) Eighty-nine percent of the students were born in the Dominican Republic. The other ten percent was comprised of students from Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Table 1 presents the 1983-84 program students by country of origin.

Students coming from rural areas of the Dominican Republic had little, if any, access to formal schooling, thereby making their adjustment to an American school more difficult. Consequently, there was a high percentage of program students who were overage for their grade. Students in grade nine ranged in age from thirteen to twenty years old, and those in grade ten ranged from fourteen to nineteen (see Table 2).

In the first year of program operation there were more male than female students in both ninth and tenth grades. The highest concentration of students (68 percent) was in grade nine (see Table 3 for student information on sex and grade).

In their native language, program students ranged in literacy from functionally illiterate to one to two years below grade level.

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Program Students by Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Number	Percent
Dominican Republic	187	89
El Salvador	7	3
Honduras	5	2
Ecuador	4	2
Nicaragua	2	Less than 1
Puerto Rico	1	Less than 1
United States	2	Less than 1
Guatemala	1	Less than 1
Spain	1	Less than 1
TOTAL	210	100%

- All program students were native speakers of Spanish. All, except two born in the U.S., were born in a Spanish-speaking country.

- Eighty-nine percent of the students were born in the Dominican Republic.

TABLE 2

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Total
13	1	0	1
14	[redacted]	2	8
15	[redacted]	[redacted]	34
16	43	[redacted]	66
17	28	17	45
18	17	6	23
19	12	3	15
20	2	0	2
TOTAL	132	62	194

Overage Students			
Number	102	26	128
Percent	77	42	66

Note. Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

- Sixty-six percent of the program students were overage.
- The highest percentage of overage students was in grade nine (77 percent).

TABLE 3

Number and Percent of Program Students by Sex and Grade

Grade	Number Male Students	Percent of Grade	Number Female Students	Percent of Grade	Total Number	Percent of All Students
9	90	68	42	32	132	68
10	29	47	33	53	62	32
TOTAL	119	61[a]	75	39[a]	194	100

[a]Percent of program students.

- Most program students were in grade nine.
- There were twice as many male students as females in grade nine.

TABLE 4

Time Spent in the Bilingual Program[a]
(As of June 1984)

Time Spent in Bilingual Program	Number of Students Grade 9	Grade 10	Total
<1 Academic Year	14	4	18
1 Academic Year	127	62	189
TOTAL	141	66	207

[a]Rounded to the nearest year.

- Most students have participated in the program for one year.

According to the program director, the linguistic homogeneity of the community lends itself to students' developing a false sense of adjustment and integration with the larger community. It is also a source of isolation and segregation. As noted by the director, these students "can survive in the 'Barrio,' but the limited opportunity they have to use/hear English affects their ability to learn it."

According to both the director and teachers, these students face problems that are not merely academic. Socially they must adjust to an urban society and to a bureaucratic and impersonal school system. Physically, the adjustment is to new foods and cold winters. For many it is the first time they experience differentiation and discrimination on the basis of race. Many also find themselves "on the defensive because of their language." As the program director noted, their initial reaction is one of wanting to return to their native countries. (He spoke from his own experience coming to this country and to this same high school many years ago.) The financial pressure is great for students to leave school and enter the work force. For some the adjustment is further hampered by a negative attitude towards school. This is especially the case for those who have been in this country for a longer period of time; they become disillusioned and frustrated.

In an interview with a member of the evaluation team, a group of students who had been labeled as functionally illiterate in their native language were found to be unrealistic about their academic, vocational, and/or professional goals, as well as unaware of their deficiencies in

both their native language and English. They clearly did not understand the great extent of academic and linguistic progress necessary for mainstreaming, much less graduation. They nonetheless seemed highly motivated, even somewhat idealistic about their futures, expressing themselves in Spanish very clearly and coherently. In responding to questions related to their academic background, they all alluded to having had more schooling than their records suggested. Their Spanish placement tests, however, were incomplete and poorly written, suggesting a discrepancy between what they said they knew or could do, and actual ability.

The students agreed that they needed improvement in English and greater exposure to it, but felt intimidated using the little English they knew in school for fear of ridicule by their peers. All commented that outside school they used some English to negotiate for their parents and to talk to their friends.

When asked what they most liked about the bilingual program, they claimed it was the potential it gave them for developing the ability to use two languages. They also appreciated the fact that program teachers gave advice, followed-up with letters to students' homes, and explained what they could not understand. Overall, they expressed appreciation of teachers who kept them on track since, as one so aptly put it, "El tiempo que se pierde no se vuelve a recuperar" (Time wasted is never regained).

These students and others who were observed were very respectful toward their superiors in the classrooms and in their interactions with

the program director and other staff. In turn, one of the teachers described the students as "loving and giving."

STAFF CHARACTERISTICS

Appendix A summarizes the certification and experience of the professional and paraprofessional staffs. In addition to the teachers, who are not supported by Title VII, the program staff includes the director, a family assistant, three paraprofessionals, one secretary, and one program consultant. Other non-instructional tax-levy personnel serving the target population include a grade advisor, a guidance counselor, and a second bilingual family assistant.

All instructional and non-instructional staff assigned full-time to the program are bilingual in English and Spanish. Numbered among their characteristics, as pointed out by the director, are their experience, their ethnic backgrounds, and their fluency in the students' native language. They are seen as positive role models for the students. With only one exception, all program staff expressed a high degree of respect and concern for the students and for their future.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PHILOSOPHY

The program is based on an articulated philosophy of bilingual education: the acquisition of English as a second language can be expedited by the development of literacy skills in the native language. This premise is based on research that has established that in order to maximize students' gains in a second language they must have reached a certain level or threshold of proficiency in their native language. By building on students' existing basic interpersonal communication skills in their native language and providing them with the opportunity to develop cognitive-academic language proficiency in that same language, a stronger foundation for English as a second language is laid.

The program philosophy is supported by the principal who was newly appointed to the school this year. As part of his initial duties, the principal developed a comprehensive plan reflecting his goals for the school. Although the primary emphasis is on English language acquisition, there is nonetheless some commitment to bilingual education, as instruction in and through two languages is an integral part of his plan:

> Thus, for students who speak Spanish but who are unable to read or write Spanish, a total immersion program in English would be scheduled for three periods per day for two semesters, in addition to instruction in reading and writing Spanish and content-area instruction in a bilingual program.

In directing himself to the E.S.L. program, the principal writes:

> There is a need to review and revitalize an E.S.L. program and to accelerate the English language learning process in order to impact on the disturbingly high dropout rate of Hispanic students. Students who enter high school

> at age 15 and who are not involved in mainstream courses for several years really do not, in fact, drop out but are pushed out through boredom and a bleak future.
>
> A program for the student with limited English proficiency would require an immersion in English four instructional periods per day and would concentrate on providing a foundation in oral reading and writing skills.

Both the principal and the program director agree that bilingual education in general and native language literacy in particular is necessary for this population and that transfers into all-English classes should not be made hastily.

Given this philosophy, the program aims to assist students in developing their native language skills in order to facilitate their adjustment to an eventual all-English program of instruction and the completion of graduation requirements. It is also felt that enhancing students' skills in their native language will lead to feelings of success and by extension to the development of a positive self concept. To accomplish this within the program's framework, students with the least developed native language literacy skills receive intensive native language arts instruction, content-area instruction primarily in the native language, and intensive E.S.L. instruction. Those with a higher degree of literacy in the native language are given less intensive native language arts instruction. Once a certain level of proficiency in English has been reached, students are expected to function in content-area classes using more English.

The program also aims to help recently arrived students adjust to their new surroundings, and to establish and strengthen a school-home tie by increased service to parents and greater contact with them, which would

lead to their greater interest and involvement in school and in their children's education.

HISTORY

The school's commitment to bilingual education is evident in its history. Bilingual content-area courses have been offered at George Washington since 1970. In 1978, the administration appointed a committee to study and recommend a coordinated bilingual education program which would collaborate with all school departments. The resulting program was funded by Title VII from 1979 to 1981. In 1981, the Title VII Bilingual Academic and Career Orientation Program was funded for two years for students who had not previously been served by this source. Its main thrust was on dropout prevention through intensive career orientation together with native language course offerings and the development of second language skills.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The B.S.D.P., as part of the school's larger bilingual program, functions within the foreign language department. The program director, who is also the foreign language chair and acting assistant principal (A.P.), reports to the principal and works closely with the E.S.L. department chair, among other school administrators. In his capacity as acting A.P., the director participates in the principal's cabinet.

The director (as acting A.P.) has full responsibility for planning and coordinating all bilingual and foreign language instruction offered in the school. As program director, he has responsibility for all instructional

and non-instructional services affecting program students and all administrative, supervisory, curricular, and fiscal matters involving program staff. Observation and interviews made it apparent that the director is highly respected by his colleagues, students, and other administrative personnel.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As described in the proposal, goals for the target students included:

1) developing literacy and oral proficiency in English;

2) developing literacy skills in Spanish;

3) referring selected participants to bilingual programs not funded by the Act;

4) enhancing cognitive development by teaching content areas bilingually;

5) increasing attendance; and

6) helping establish realistic college/career goals.

Other program goals were to increase the staff's cultural sensitivity to the target population; to train them in bi-literacy skills development and individualized instruction; and to have them adapt and develop materials suitable for use with the target population. In addition, the program aimed to increase parental involvement in their children's education, and to increase participation in adult education classes.

FUNDING

The program draws on four sources of funding: tax-levy, Chapter I/ P.S.E.N., and Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Table 5 presents the funding sources for both the instructional and non-instructional program components, noting the services provided under each funding source.

TABLE 5

Sources of Funding and Services Provided

Funding Source	Service Provided
Tax-levy funds	Bilingual content-area teachers, bilingual guidance counselor, bilingual grade advisor
Chapter I - P.S.E.N.	E.S.L. and native language teachers, four E.S.L. paraprofessionals
Title VII	Project administration, bilingual secretary, three bilingual paraprofessionals, family assistant, consultant

Although the goals of the program were primarily academic, the bulk of the Title VII services dealt indirectly with academic achievement by providing administrative and support services. Additionally, Title VII funds supported paraprofessional positions to individualize instruction and to increase home contact. The family assistant provided direct contact with parents and monitoring of students in need. The consultant, to a limited

degree, provided all involved a greater understanding of the program's philosophy and manner of implementation. Because of unexpected problems resulting from the appointment of a new principal, the program consultant found himself often negotiating a better understanding of and, therefore, support for the program with the principal.

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

STUDENT SELECTION, PLACEMENT, AND PROGRAMMING

Candidates for program participation included all new arrivals to this country eligible for ninth grade based on age and/or previous school experience. Each candidate was tested and interviewed to assess oral English proficiency and Spanish literacy. To this end, the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was given as a measure of English proficiency, Spanish reading was tested using La Prueba de Lectura, and an informal writing assessment was given for Spanish writing. Students who fell below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB and who demonstrated poor reading and writing skills in Spanish were admitted to the program. Based on the results of the placement interviews and tests, the director assigned students to one of three instructional groups -- pre-remedial, basic remedial, or advanced remedial.

Mainstreaming is planned as a gradual process involving placing students in higher level English classes, including an advanced oral communication class in the English department and in American Studies I in the social studies department. With increased progress in the native language, students will also be mainstreamed into an ungraded advanced Spanish for native speakers class, which falls out of program jurisdiction. However, no students were eligible for mainstreaming within this first year. Given the program's emphasis upon E.S.L. and native language arts (comprising four to five periods a day), as well as bilingual content-area instruction, it was only possible to mainstream students in gym.

INSTRUCTIONAL OFFERINGS AND APPROACHES

The program was organized to offer the three student groups different amounts of native language instruction based on their assessed needs. Group W, the pre-remedial group, consisted of an almost totally illiterate population. Remedial Group R possessed some native language literacy skills, but nonetheless, was in need of native language remediation. Advanced remedial Group X was in need of some remediation for more advanced native language literacy.

As part of the director's responsibilities, he coordinated with the E.S.L. chairman to block program some students. Teachers felt that this arrangement created homogeneous classes but exacerbated discipline and motivational problems.

All three groups were given three periods of E.S.L. daily. The remaining classes except for gym, were taught in the students' native language. The academic program for each group is presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Contents of Instructional Program
Based on Students' Native Language Ability

	Group W # Periods	Group R # Periods	Group X # Periods
Spanish as a Native Language	2	1	1
English as a Second Language	3	3	3
Bilingual Math	1	1	1
Gym	1	1	1
Lunch	1	1	1
Bilingual Typing	0	1	0
Bilingual Social Studies	0	1	1

While the 25 students comprising Group W traveled as a block, the 100 students in Group R and the 75 in Group X did not. Their programming was more individualized. Appendix B includes a complete list of the E.S.L., native language arts, and content-area courses offered to program students during the fall and spring semesters.

Standard remedial texts were used in all classes as presented in Table 7. However, to compensate for a lack of appropriate teaching materials, especially for Group W, teachers prepared many of their own materials to accompany existing texts.

In addition to the standard academic curriculum, most teachers agreed to the necessity of focusing all curricula either directly or indirectly on basic communication. Aside from this instructional orientation, stress was also placed on developing social survival skills, such as family planning, hygiene, and filling out forms. This orientation was articulated by the program director, who also felt the need for a course introducing students to New York City. Some of this direction was evident in classes observed by a member of the evaluation team. In a native language arts class the subject under discussion was health and nutrition. Oral language was stressed in the E.S.L. and two native language arts classes observed. Teaching strategies used by teachers included:

1) use of the native language as a model for students;
2) paraphrasing other students and the text;
3) highlighting different dialect forms;
4) encouraging different forms of participation from students less prone to participate orally, e.g., reading;

TABLE 7

Curriculum by Course

Course	Description	Curriculum or Materials in Use
E.S.L. I, IA*	Beginning E.S.L.	English for a Changing World
E.S.L. Rdg. 1A*	E.S.L. for students with limited native language skills	Before Book One; teacher-prepared materials
E.S.L. Rdg. 1	Beginning E.S.L.	Teacher-prepared materials; English for a Changing World
E.S.L. 2	Beginning E.S.L.	Odyssey 2
E.S.L. Rdg. 2	Beginning E.S.L.	Teacher-prepared materials for Odyssey 2
E.S.L. 3	Intermediate E.S.L.	Eng. Alpha; Composition
E.S.L. 4	Advanced E.S.L.	Eng. Alpha; Composition
N.L.A. I*	Basic course for illiterates	Basic text; audio-visuals; teacher-made materials
N.L.A. II*	Basic course for illiterates	Basic text; audio-visuals; teacher-made materials
N.L.A. III*	Basic course and Rdg. course	Basic text; audio-visuals; teacher-made materials
N.L.A. IV	Literature	Basic text; teacher-made materials

*Programmed exclusively for the target population.

5) providing a source of concept enrichment by amplifying on concepts from the text and from other students;

6) expanding students' vocabulary by providing synonyms; and

7) creating a sensitivity to language form by having students break down complex unknown words into simple and familiar ones.

In the lesson observed on health and nutrition, the teacher clearly added to the interest level and made the language level more understandable to the students. Some specific strategies used by the teacher included:

1) reading orally while the students followed in the text;

2) bringing in relevant food samples from the students' culture and discussing their nutritional value, e.g., "platano" (plaintain);

3) listing several words from different regions of Latin America used to describe the same item;

4) allowing students to contribute personal experiences related to the discussion; and

5) using every opportunity to expand the students' vocabulary.

Clearly there was a wealth of strategies being employed in these classes to enhance native language development which could easily provide a solid point of departure for future teacher training efforts in language development. Since language development has traditionally been the domain of the elementary school language arts and reading specialists, its integration with content-area subjects by high school teachers is not always done consciously or systematically. Thus, in spite of the program director's realization of a need to avoid teaching vocabulary in isolation, coupled with a need to make language learning content-centered and thematic, there is a need to incorporate this perception into staff training activities.

The question of how to best develop language among dually limited students was highlighted by one E.S.L. teacher, who was also bilingual. After discussing with her the frustration she felt over the lack of materials and training in instructional strategies, a member of the evaluation team offered some concrete suggestions. This concern for more direction in dealing with a difficult population seemed to come from her and others. On the other hand, teachers showed a knowledge of the students' culture and the ability to integrate it with their classroom instruction.

While both the native language arts classes and the bilingual content-area classes were observed to be conducted exclusively in Spanish, the E.S.L. class used some Spanish to clarify concepts and to help students remain on task. This was especially evident in the paraprofessional's monitoring of student work.

From both observation and interview it was evident that one of the main functions of the paraprofessionals was to assist teachers in monitoring students' homework, their participation, and their class work. Although only one paraprofessional was observed in class, all were interviewed. In the interviews, the paraprofessionals highlighted the other functions they performed. Since they do not always work with the same teacher, they had developed different functions in different classes. In some, they would assist individual students to understand the classwork. In other classes, they would bring new students up to par with current work. When necessary, paraprofessionals also served as home-school contacts. One paraprofessional observed that students were generally "more open with us" and "related

better to us." This paraprofessional, in particular, identified herself as a "mother figure."

V. NON-INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Since curriculum development was not a program objective, the New York City school system's curricula were adapted for use in bilingual content-area classes, along with commercially-developed materials. Texts, teacher guides, and other materials developed by the Office of Bilingual Education were a major resource. Teachers, however, felt that the curriculum as it currently exists was inappropriate, and that special materials were needed for this population. Because of the scarcity of materials for use with high school students with low literacy skills in their native language, teachers created and adapted materials in all areas (E.S.L., N.L.A., social studies, etc.).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

A bilingual guidance counselor and bilingual grade advisor, both supported with tax-levy monies, provided support services to participating students in addition to the mainstream population. Target students additionally had the services of two family assistants, one of whom was supported by Title VII. The increase in support personnel facilitated by Title VII funds made possible increased contact with parents. All support services personnel, and the program director and teachers as well, personally knew and were involved in the lives of the students outside school. Teachers, paraprofessionals, family assistants, as well as the secretary, contacted parents by mail, phone, or in person when students were failing, frequently absent,

or showed evidence of other problems interfering with their achievement or behavior in school. For this purpose, a series of forms facilitating home-school contact were used. When necessary, the family assistant or the director contacted students' homes at night by phone. As evidence of the increased home contact and resultant rapport that developed between teachers and parents, approximately half of the program's parents were present for open school night.

In addition to the family assistant's responsibility to the target population, she also maintained contact with the counselor and dean with respect to other Spanish-speaking students outside the program. When necessary, she also served as translator for other school personnel. During report card time, she reviewed student records to single out those who were failing. Students were contacted and referred for tutoring, or their parents were contacted. Another family assistant also assisted with math tutoring.

With less success, parent meetings were held to inform them of the program and services available to them and their families. Meetings, although held at different times, still had low attendance.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Because of the need to prepare teachers to deal with the unique language problems of the target population, staff development was an important program goal. The program specifically proposed that 100 percent of the staff would be involved in in-service training to develop bilingual skills, cultural sensitivity, and expertise in the area of individualized instruction. To this end, the program consultant had planned five workshops

focusing on instructional issues for the beginning of the academic year. The meetings were to explain the program objectives, deal with related theoretical issues, and respond to staff concerns. The first three meetings were attended by the bilingual and E.S.L. teachers, the paraprofessionals, and the guidance counselors.

The director and E.S.L. chair also coordinated a common preparation period for E.S.L. and native language arts teachers during which the program consultant provided formal and informal staff training. This time was also set aside to give teachers an opportunity to plan jointly and to deal cooperatively with problems of discipline and academic failure. No other staff development efforts were reported.

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The program director held a number of staff and parent advisory committee meetings. The parent meetings were set up to inform parents of the program's progress and to get their input in the redesign of the project. Attendance, however, was adversely affected by poor neighborhood security, and parents' financial problems, childcare responsibilites, and employment schedules.

Parents were also encouraged to take part in the school's Saturday morning adult education program which included E.S.L., math, and general equivalency diploma preparation. The time was also used to motivate parents to pursue vocational training through Hostos Community College, where instruction is offered bilingually. The classes served approximately 95 adults throughout the year.

In this first project year, involvement with parents dealt mainly with helping them adjust to a new language and social environment. Indirectly, it also dealt with parents' assumption that education was the sole responsibility of the school. By keeping parents completely abreast of the behavior and progress of their children in school, the program promoted greater parental involvement and responsibility. Hopefully, the net result will be felt in the near future. What was observed this year was that parents felt free to call or come to the bilingual office for any kind of assistance with personal problems affecting their families.

VI. FINDINGS: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTENDANCE

The following section presents the assessment of the program objectives as proposed to and accepted by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education and describes the instruments and procedures used.

ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH SYNTAX

The program proposed that approximately 65 percent of the students enrolled in English as a second language classes would master 10 or more objectives per year as measured by the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST). This represents a gain of approximately one CREST objective per month of instruction.

The CREST was developed by the New York City Public Schools to measure mastery of instructional objectives of the E.S.L. curricula. There are four items for each objective, and mastery of an objective is achieved when three of the items are answered correctly. The test has three levels: beginning (I), intermediate (II), and advanced (III). The maximum score on Levels I and II is 25, while the maximum score on Level III is 15. Extensive information on CREST objectives and psychometric properties are in the Technical Manual, New York City English as Second Language Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test.*

Mean differences between pretest and posttest are computed to represent the gain score, and an index which represents the number of objectives mastered per month is computed by dividing the mean gain by the average months of treatment.

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*Board of Education of the City of New York, Division of High Schools, 1978.

The CREST was administered at the beginning and end of both the fall and spring semesters. Table 8 presents the test results for students who were pretested and posttested with the same test level during each semester.

Complete data were available for 119 students in the fall semester and for 88 students in the spring semester. Examination of Table 8 reveals that, in the fall, students who were tested on Levels I and II mastered an average of approximately 2.1 CREST objectives per month. No students were tested on Level III in the fall. In the spring, students mastered an average of 1.1 CREST objectives per month.

Overall, the program objective of attaining one CREST objective per month was surpassed, except for students tested at Level I in the spring semester, who achieved 0.9 objectives per month.

TABLE 8

Results of the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test

(Program Students Pretested and Posttested on Same Test Level)

Test Level	Number of Students	Average Number of Objectives Mastered Pre	Post	Objectives Mastered*	Average Months of Treatment	Objectives Mastered Per Month
			Fall			
I	116	5.9	12.3	6.4	3.0	2.1
II	3	10.0	15.3	5.3	2.9	1.8
TOTAL	119	6.0	12.3	6.3	2.9	2.1
			Spring			
I	74	10.3	13.1	2.8	3.0	0.9
II	10	13.0	19.4	6.4	3.0	2.1
III	4	8.2	12.0	3.7	3.0	1.2
TOTAL	88	10.5	13.8	3.2	3.0	1.1

*Post-test minus pre-test.

- Most program students were tested on CREST Level I and made larger gains in the fall than in the spring.
- Overall performance on the CREST surpassed the program objective.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN NATIVE LANGUAGE READING

The program proposed that students receiving a full year of instruction in native language arts would increase their performance on the appropriate level of the Prueba de Lectura at the .05 level of statistical significance.

The Prueba de Lectura is part of the Interamerican Series of Tests published by the Guidance Testing Associates. The purpose of the series is to evaluate reading achievement in Spanish for Spanish-speaking students from the Western hemisphere. The Prueba de Lectura, forms CE and DE, level 3 correspond to grades four through six for the original norming done in Puerto Rico. However, the publishers recommend that local norms be developed for tests.* Accordingly, the analysis was applied to raw scores.

The Prueba de Lectura was administered in the fall and again in spring. The pretest and posttest raw score means and standard deviations are presented in Table 9. Data for both tests were available for 154 program students (73 percent of the total). Statistical significance was determined through the application of the correlated t-test model to demonstrate whether the difference between pretest and posttest mean scores is larger than would be expected by chance variation alone.

*Information on psychometric properties may be found in Guidance Testing Associates Examiner's Manual, Prueba de Lectura, St. Mary's University, One Camino Santa Maria, San Antonio, Texas 78284.

The score gains on the Prueba de Lectura for the total population were statistically significant (at 0.01), meeting the program objective in Spanish reading. Students in grade nine gained 15 raw score points, and students in grade ten gained 12 raw score points.

TABLE 9

Native Language Achievement

Significance of Mean Total Raw Score Differences Between Initial and Final Test Scores of Program Students with Full Instructional Treatment on the Prueba de Lectura, Level 3, by Grade

		Pretest		Posttest			
Grade	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Effect Size
9	106	38.7	19.1	53.5	17.0	14.8**	1.2
10	48	50.2	19.8	62.3	15.3	12.1**	0.9

**Significant at 0.01 level.

•All students tested made statistically significant gains from pretest to posttest; thus, the program objective was achieved.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES, AND TYPING

The program proposed that 65 percent of the students receiving instruction in math, science, social studies, and typing would pass criterion referenced tests and would be promoted to the next level. Table 10 presents the passing rates for program students enrolled in these courses in the fall and spring.

The overall passing rates of students who were reported as enrolled in mathematics classes were 56 percent in the fall and 60 percent in the spring. The overall passing rates were as follows: in science courses, 65 percent in the fall and 37 percent in the spring; in social studies courses, 50 percent in the fall and 33 percent in the spring; and for typing, 80 percent in the fall and 82 percent in the spring.

The 65 percent passing objective was surpassed by students at all grade levels in typing both semesters, by tenth-grade math students in the spring (80 percent), and by ninth-grade science students in the fall (68 percent). The objective was not achieved in social studies at any grade level.

TABLE 10

Number of Program Students Attending Courses and Percent Passing Teacher-Made Examinations in Content-Area Subjects[a]

Course	Fall Grade 9 N	Fall Grade 9 % Passing	Fall Grade 10 N	Fall Grade 10 % Passing	Spring Grade 9 N	Spring Grade 9 % Passing	Spring Grade 10 N	Spring Grade 10 % Passing	Fall Total N	Fall Total % Passing	Spring Total N	Spring Total % Passing
Mathematics	112	55	62	57	126	52	56	80	174	56	182	60
Science	31	68	31	61	25	44	32	31	62	65	57	37
Social Studies	56	57	38	40	60	30	24	42	94	50	84	33
Typing	45	71	25	96	65	82	34	82	70	80	99	82

[a]Mathematics courses include algebra, fundamental math, and remedial math. Science courses include general science and biology. Social studies courses include world/global history and American history.

- The highest overall passing rates were achieved by students in typing classes. These students surpassed the program objective.
- The program objective was also achieved by students in fall science classes.

ATTENDANCE RATES

The program proposed that participating students would improve their attendance rate by 25 percent. Table 11 presents attendance rates for program students by semester and grade.

Due to the high attendance rate for the fall (92 percent), it was impossible to meet the objective. In fact, there was a decline in attendance rates from fall to spring of four percentage points. The program yearly attendance rate (90 percent) was 15 percentage points higher than the schoolwide attendance rate (75 percent). A z-test (z= 4.72) for the significance of the differences between these proportions indicated that the difference in attendance rates is statistically significant. Therefore, although the proposed objective was not met because it was unrealistic, the program attendance was significantly higher than the schoolwide attendance.

TABLE 11

Attendance Percentages of Program Students

Fall				Spring			
Grade	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of Cases	Grade	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of Cases
9	92	14	131	9	89	16	136
10	91	13	58	10	87	18	62
TOTAL	92	14	189	TOTAL	88	17	198

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

In the first year of the B.S.D.P. project, the goals were found to be theoretically well grounded and sensibly formulated except for the attendance objective, given its philosophy, its target population, and its available resources. In most cases the program was able to deliver its proposed services. In spite of a late start and the administrative changes that accompanied the appointment of a new principal, it has been relatively successful in accomplishing its organizational goals.

Students made large gains in English and Spanish, and had high passing rates in typing. However, they did not have high passing rates in social studies, mathematics, or science, and failed to meet proposed objectives in these areas. Because program students had a 92 percent attendance in the fall, they could not improve 25 percent as proposed. However, their attendance rate was significantly higher than the schoolwide rate.

The staff understands student needs clearly, but the task is sometimes overwhelming for this population. These students exhibit greater academic, linguistic, and psychological needs than most other bilingual program students. These needs are rarely if ever addressed by traditional teacher-training programs and existing curriculum materials. These problems are exacerbated by the fact that the students' culture has been transformed by their need to survive in a less than friendly environment (one that is, at times, hostile). Their language learning problems are further complicated by the students' limited exposure to English.

Program organization and staff characteristics have facilitated the implementation of the program. The integrated role of the director as acting assistant principal, foreign language chair, bilingual program coordinator, and Title VII program director gives him flexibility in coordinating all services for the bilingual population. His ability to communicate with his colleagues, and the respect he receives from staff, students, and their parents, have also contributed to the program's success. The staff's knowledge of program goals, their interest in and commitment to the students they serve, and their extensive experience, have also contributed to the program's achievements.

Another positive feature of the program is its non-instructional services. It has established contact with homes and with service agencies to a much greater extent than the school itself has been able to do. It has also attracted parents to the school by offering adult education classes and other opportunities to discuss problems only peripherally related to the students' education, in the language in which they are most comfortable.

Overall, there is a very close relationship between home and school made possible by the personal interest and attention of all personnel involved with the program, including the director, teachers, paraprofessionals, and non-instructional support personnel. Their ability to speak Spanish, in addition to their personal interest in the students and their problems, and a sensitivity to their culture has made for greater cultural congruence between home and school.

As documented by both teachers and program director, some unintended outcomes resulted from the block programming of the students with greatest

needs. Because of this arrangement, students most in need of exposure to English received the least amount of exposure and opportunity to use it in mainstream settings. Additionally, by programming students to three periods of E.S.L. and two of native language arts, these students appeared to become isolated and restless; they seemed to demonstrate more behavior problems. In essence, grouping by need created difficult classes and negatively affected group dynamics. However, since it created classes with students closer in ability, it was instructionally easier for the teachers, even though more difficult in terms of motivation and discipline. Problems were often alleviated before they got out of hand, because of the availability of support personnel to interact more personally with students and to contact homes.

In light of the language limitations of the students and the training limitations of the teachers in dealing with this population, a structured and on-going staff development effort was needed. Not only was this need perceived by the evaluation team but it was also voiced by the teachers. They clearly wanted the program consultant "more available to them." Teacher training needs were apparent, as they were for the paraprofessionals, in order to enable them to serve more effectively in individualizing instruction.

Teacher interviews indicated that another problem facing N.L.A. and E.S.L. instruction was the lack of appropriate materials for dually limited high school students (students with minimal literacy skills in the native language and a limited knowledge of, and environmental exposure to, English). This teaching-learning problem was intensified, given the

students' age, their limited school experience in their native countries, and the cultural and linguistic adjustment that they faced.

In Summary

Instructionally, the program has attempted to accommodate students of varied levels of native language and English proficiency in an intensive effort to upgrade skills in both languages. Conceptually and theoretically, the program has a good foundation. The non-instructional support system is quite strong and pervades the entire program. Overall, the staff is sensitive and concerned. The program is well organized to meet its objectives with a relatively clear understanding by the staff of its theoretical basis and goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to make the program more effective in meeting its goals.

Exposure to English

Within the classroom, content-area teachers could systematically plan for the gradual introduction of English in their subject matter, possibly with lesson summaries in English.

The E.S.L. teachers need to create classroom contexts and activities that allow students to hear and use English naturally. For example, teachers could involve students in:

1. expanded routines in English in all content areas;
2. role-playing of real life situations in which English is used;

3. viewing English T.V. programs, given a specific task;

4. memorizing and then paraphrasing the lyrics of popular English songs; and

5. telephoning and reporting back to the class taped English messages such as the weather report.

Additionally, students need to be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities and events that allow them to develop their nonacademic interests and use their skills in an environment in which English is the sole medium of communication.

Cultural Accommodation

The shock experienced by students who come into contact with a new and sometimes conflicting culture and value system, needs to be alleviated. For this purpose, a course could be offered to orient students to the services of New York City, prepare them with essential survival skills including the use of English in the environment (signs, directions, names, labels, subway maps), prepare them to be informed consumers, and help them formulate realistic goals for the future based on an assessment of their skills.

Teacher Training

Due to the nature of the student population, teachers and paraprofessionals need additional training in individualized instruction through grouping, motivating "turned-off" and "burnt-out" students, developing basic literacy skills in the native language, developing basic oral and literacy skills in a second language when there is no native language literacy base, and ways of developing survival skills and assisting in the cultural acclimation process.

VIII. APPENDICES

Appendix A

Staff Characteristics

Staff Function	Certification	Experience
Project Director	Spanish DHS	14 years
Native Language Arts	Spanish DHS BL Common Br.	3 years
Math	BL Math	12 years
Typing	Spanish	2 years
Social Studies	BL Social St.	10 years
ESL - Teacher A	ESL	16 years
ESL - Teacher B	ESL	17 years
ESL - Teacher C	ESL	24 years
ESL - Teacher D	ESL	13 years
ESL - Teacher E	ESL	20 years
ESL - Teacher F	ESL	25 years
Family Assistant	NA	7 years
Paraprofessional A	NA	4 years
Paraprofessional B	NA	7 years

APPENDIX B

Instruction in English as a Second Language and English Reading (Fall)

Course Title and Level	Number of Classes	Average Register	Class Periods Per Week	Is Class for Program Students Exclusively?	Type of Credit	Paraprofessional Assistance	Description	Curriculum or Material in Use
E.S.L. 1	10	29	10	No	1	Yes*	Beginning E.S.L.	English for a Changing World
E.S.L. Rdg. 1	8	37	5	No	1/2	No	" "	Teacher-prepared materials
E.S.L. 2	10	26	10	No	1	Yes*	" "	English for a Changing World
E.S.L. Rdg. 2	6	30	5	No	1/2	No	" "	Teacher-prepared materials
E.S.L. 3	7	24	10	No	1	Yes*	Intermediate E.S.L.	English Alphs., Comp.
E.S.L. 4	5	25	10	No	1	Yes*	Advanced E.S.L.	English Alphs., Comp.

*Chapter 1/PSEN Funded Classes Only.

Instruction in English as a Second Language and English Reading (Spring)

Course Title and Level	Number of Classes	Average Register	Class Periods Per Week	Is Class for Program Students Exclusively?	Type of Credit	Paraprofessional Assistance	Description	Curriculum or Material in Use
E.S.L. 1	5	27	10	No	1	Yes*	Beginning E.S.L.	English for a Changing World
E.S.L. 1A	5	20	10	Yes	1	Yes	" "	" "
E.S.L. Rdg. 1A	4	25	5	Yes	1/2	Yes	ESL for students with low literacy skills in native language	Before book one; teacher-prepared materials
E.S.L. Rdg. 1	4	36	5	No	1/2	No	Beginning E.S.L.	Odyssey 2; teacher-prepared materials; English for a Changing World
E.S.L. 2	11	24	10	No	1	Yes*	" "	" "
E.S.L. Rdg. 2	7	29	5	No	1/2	No	" "	" "
E.S.L. 3	7	19	10	No	1/2	Yes*	Intermediate E.S.L.	English Alphs., Comp.
E.S.L. 4	5	25	10	No	1	Yes*	Advanced E.S.L.	" " "

*Chapter 1/PSEN Funded Classes Only.

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Instruction in the Native Language(s)

Course Title and Level	Number of Classes	Average Register	Class Periods Per Week	Is Class for Program Students Exclusively?	Type of Credit	Paraprofessional Assistance	Description	Curriculum or Material in Use
FALL								
I Native Lang. Arts	1	25	5	Yes	NC	Yes	I Basic course for illiterates in Spanish	Basic Text Books/ Audio Visual
II Native Language Arts	4	25	5	Yes	NC	Yes	II Basic course for illiterates	" " "
III Native Language Arts	3	30	5	No	1 cr	Yes	III Basic course and reading course	" " "
SPRING								
I Native Language Arts	1	23	5	Yes	NC	Yes	I Basic course for illiterates in Spanish	Basic text and teacher-made materials
II Native Language Arts	5	25	5	Yes	NC	Yes	II Basic course for illiterates	" "
III Native Language Arts	3	30	5	Yes	1 cr	Yes	III Basic course and reading course	" "
IV Native Language Arts	2	30	5	Yes	1 cr	Yes		" "

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Bilingual Instruction in Subject Areas[a] (Fall Semester)

Course Title	No. of Classes	Average Register	Language of Instruction	Criteria for Selection of Students	Paraprofessional Assistance?	Percent of Material in Native Language
Basic Arithmetic[b]	5	32	90% Spanish	Placement Test	Yes	99
Bilingual Typing[b]	5	30	" "	Guid. Counselor	Yes	90
Global History I	3	35	" "	" "	Yes	90
Global History II	2	35	" "	" "	No	90
Global History III	2	35	" "	" "	No	65
General Science I	3	35	" "	" "	No	85
Biology I	3	35	80% "	" "	No	65
N.L.A.[b]	6	25	100% "	Placement Test	Yes	
Spanish LSX 3[b]	2	30	" "	" "	Yes	

Bilingual Instruction in Subject Areas[a] (Spring Semester)

Course Title	No. of Classes	Average Register	Language of Instruction	Criteria for Selection of Students	Paraprofessional Assistance?	Percent of Material in Native Language
Basic Arithmetic	5	34	90% Spanish	Placement Test	Yes	50
Bilingual Typing[b]	4	34	" "	Guid. Counselor	Yes	90
Global History I	2	34	" "	" "	No	90
Global History II	2	34	" "	" "	No	90
Global History III	1	34	80% "	" "	No	70
General Science II	5	34	90% "	" "	No	50
Biology II	4	34	80% "	" "	No	50
N.L.A.[b]	6	25	100% "	Placement Test	Yes	
Spanish LSX 3[b]	2	30	" "	Guid. Counselor	Yes	
Spanish LSX 4[b]	2	30	" "	" "	Yes	

[a]All classes met five periods each week and used materials that corresponded to the mainstream curriculum.

[b]Class was exclusively for program students.